

6.0 CHAPTER 6 COMMENTS AND COORDINATION

Early and ongoing public and agency involvement occurred throughout the life of the New Pueblo Freeway project through a carefully designed and strategic public involvement process. The goal of the Context Sensitive Solutions process was to provide meaningful participation in the decision process, beginning with defining the problem and continuing through development of alternative solutions, evaluation and screening of alternatives, and selection of the Preferred Alternative for implementation. The process was designed to solicit information, ideas, and opinions from the public and agencies interested in the project.

Using the basic principles of Context Sensitive Solutions described in **Chapter 2 – Alternatives**, the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) Project Team developed a Public Involvement Plan (PIP) that is:

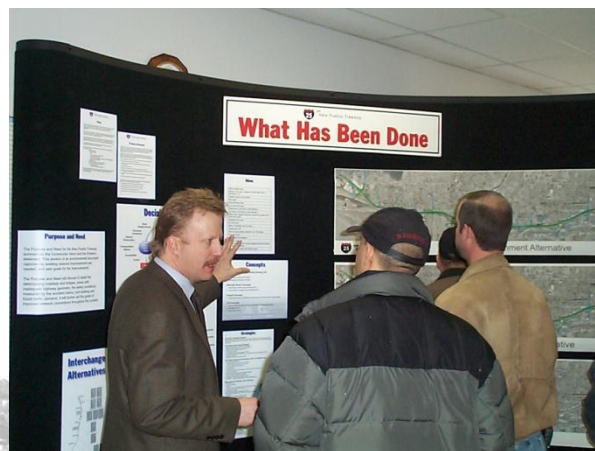
- ❖ Proactive
- ❖ Tailored to the City of Pueblo's (City's) needs and conditions
- ❖ Frequent and ongoing
- ❖ Inclusive
- ❖ Innovative, using a variety of techniques
- ❖ Intended to affect the planning processes and planning decisions

An early step in development of the PIP involved identifying the stakeholders for the project. Stakeholders are the individuals and groups likely to be affected by the project; they are those people who have a “stake” in the outcome. For Pueblo, the list of stakeholders includes the following:

- ❖ Property owners and renters adjacent to Interstate 25 (I-25) (residential, commercial, industrial, educational, religious, government, and non-profit organizations)
- ❖ Interstate 25 users (commuters, truckers, and business customers)
- ❖ City of Pueblo and Pueblo County elected and appointed officials (City Council and County Commissioners)
- ❖ City of Pueblo and Pueblo County transportation or technical professionals (public works employees, traffic engineers/planners, urban and neighborhood planners)
- ❖ Pueblo Area Council of Governments (PACOG) transportation planners

- ❖ Pueblo neighborhood groups
- ❖ Pueblo service clubs and business organizations
- ❖ Pueblo Historic Preservation Commission
- ❖ Historic Pueblo, Inc.
- ❖ Bessemer Historic Society Steelworks Museum

During the scoping process, the CDOT Project Team recognized the need to have a public involvement program that provides meaningful participation from Pueblo citizens in project design and the decision process. Much of the corridor is made up of special populations with a wide variety of issues; therefore, the CDOT Project Team hosted forums that involved full integration of citizens likely to be affected by the project. The I-25 corridor through Pueblo is predominately made up of low-income residents living in neighborhoods comprising diverse ethnic cultures and minority groups. The early identification of minority and low-income communities helped tailor the public involvement tools, techniques, and event locations. The project was guided by the Environmental Justice principle that “Ensures the full and fair participation by all potentially affected communities in the transportation decision-making process.” (**Section 3.6 Social Resources, Economic Conditions, and Environmental Justice** provides a detailed discussion on this topic.) Following this guidance led to additional outreach efforts, which in turn resulted in more minority, low-income, and elderly people attending public meetings where their voices were heard by the CDOT Project Team.



Public Scoping Meeting



Public Scoping Meeting

Implementation of the PIP involved activities that encouraged the stakeholders to participate as members of the planning and design team. The Context Sensitive Solutions approach used for this project supported a decision process that brought citizens together with elected officials, local transportation and technical professionals, and the CDOT planning and engineering staff to work through problem definitions and transportation solutions. This approach proved to be highly successful because of the willingness of the public to attend intensive and frequent workshops and to continue their involvement through a series of neighborhood meetings. The public was offered the opportunity to further comment on the mitigation measures and the Preferred Alternative at the public hearing on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), and will again have a chance to comment at the public hearing on the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS).

Context-sensitive design involves a collaborative, interdisciplinary approach in which citizens are part of the design team.

6.1 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCESS

The first step of public involvement for the project was to establish a process that would be followed by the CDOT Project Team from beginning to end of the Context Sensitive Solutions process; the end being identification of a Preferred Alternative. CDOT will continue to conduct public involvement activities throughout the life of the New Pueblo

Freeway project, through final design and construction activities.

Team members representing CDOT, the City of Pueblo, and Pueblo County endorsed the project process by signing an agreement. The agreement detailed each team's roles and responsibilities, the steps of the decision-making process, when and how stakeholders/citizens would be involved, and other guidelines under which the project would operate through its completion.

Confidence that the process was open and fair and that participation could affect the project outcome was the reason cited by a number of stakeholders/citizens for participating in the process, supporting the project, and working hard toward general consensus. Participant teams and committees are described below, followed by a list of contributions each stakeholder has made toward development of the project.

6.2 PROJECT LEADERSHIP TEAMS

Leadership teams and associated committees were formed to provide technical information and input on four different aspects of project development: public policy, planning and engineering, community values, and City parks. Throughout the project, individual teams met at regular intervals and as events warranted. The leadership teams provided multi-disciplinary input and reviews throughout the life of the project, while the committees provided the CDOT Project Team with insights into community issues on an as-needed basis. The teams/committees were the Project Leadership Team (PLT), the Technical Leadership Team (TLT), three Community Working Groups (CWG), and the Park Advisory Committee (PAC).

6.2.1 Project Leadership Team

6.2.1.1 Roles and Responsibilities

The primary focus of the PLT was to make policy-level recommendations regarding funding and to discuss potential maintenance/ownership responsibilities between the City and CDOT. Project decisions may ultimately require actions by the CDOT Transportation Commission, City Council, and County Commission; therefore, obtaining the perspective of these officials as the project progressed proved to be invaluable. The PLT met quarterly over the course of the project.

Other roles and responsibilities of the PLT included:

- ❖ Providing policy-level guidance, direction, and insights to the CDOT Project Team.
- ❖ Providing input on the project approach and strategy throughout the public involvement and study process.
- ❖ Reviewing project documents and communicating project status, issues, and recommendations to their respective agencies.

The following people served as PLT members:

- ❖ Bob Torres, formerly CDOT Region 2
- ❖ Tim Harris, CDOT Region 2
- ❖ Tom Wrona, CDOT Region 2
- ❖ David Miller, formerly CDOT Region 2
- ❖ George Tempel, CDOT Transportation Commissioner
- ❖ Tony Fortino, formerly CDOT Transportation Commissioner
- ❖ Loretta Kennedy, Pueblo County Commissioner
- ❖ Randy Thurston, Pueblo City Council
- ❖ Corinne Koehler, formerly Pueblo City Council
- ❖ Patrick Avalos, formerly Pueblo City Council
- ❖ Bill Knapp, CH2M HILL
- ❖ Mary Jo Vobejda, CH2M HILL
- ❖ Ken Conyers, Matrix Design Group



Joint Project Leadership Team and Technical Leadership Team Discussion

6.2.1.2 Summary of the Project Leadership Team Contributions

The PLT provided assistance to the CDOT Project Team in a variety of ways. Some of the important issues addressed,

meeting discussions held, and input obtained through several PLT meetings are summarized below.

- ❖ When the CDOT Project Team was studying I-25 adjacent to Mineral Palace Park on the west and the Fountain Creek floodplain on the east, the PLT helped the team understand the importance of the park, the floodplain, and the parkland in the floodplain to the City. They also helped the team study alternatives to avoid, minimize, and mitigate impacts to these Section 4(f) resources.
- ❖ During the public involvement Context Sensitive Solutions process, PLT discussions led to an agreement in which the City would employ its ability to purchase private property along Santa Fe Avenue, adjacent to Mineral Palace Park. This action by the City is necessary to support mitigation plans developed by the CDOT Project Team with the help of the PAC and local citizens. This agreement was formalized in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), dated March 2010, which is included in **Appendix F**.
- ❖ Other issues discussed at PLT meetings included the following:
 - The City would own the Dillon Drive extension after CDOT constructs the road.
 - The City agreed with CDOT's decision not to extend Dillon Drive south of United States Highway (US) 50B.
 - The City gave support to CDOT for building a split-diamond interchange between 13th Street and 1st Street using existing City street right-of-way (ROW).
 - The City agreed to assume operation and maintenance responsibilities if the Modified I-25 Alternative was chosen as the Preferred Alternative and South Santa Fe Avenue was extended south to Minnequa Avenue using the existing I-25 ROW.
- ❖ When bypass alternatives were under study, the PLT told the CDOT Project Team they were concerned about the following:
 - **Ownership and maintenance.** If I-25 were relocated as a new highway that bypasses Pueblo, CDOT would no longer maintain the existing I-25 through Pueblo. CDOT is under direction by the transportation commission not to increase the number of total highway lane miles under their ownership. The City could assume the responsibility from CDOT and own and operate the

road; however, the City does not want to add this highway to its local road network responsibilities. An ownership and maintenance agreement of the Preferred Alternative has been initiated in the MOU (see **Appendix F**).

- **Economics.** Members of the PLT voiced strong opposition to relocating I-25 outside the City boundaries. Large investments have been made by the City and the local business community that depend on nearby access from I-25 and the ability to capture travelers passing through Pueblo. The highway plays an important role in the local economy that would be compromised if it is relocated.
- ❖ Although only a few elected officials participated in the PLT, these members kept other elected officials informed on details of the New Pueblo Freeway study process.
- ❖ Because the original construction of I-25 negatively impacted numerous homes west of I-25 and south of Indiana Avenue, the PLT insisted that CDOT only consider design options that widen I-25 eastward.
- ❖ The PLT recommended that CDOT not connect I-25 to 24th Street.
- ❖ The PLT stated strong preference for implementation of the Modified I-25 Alternative (Preferred Alternative) because the alignment provides needed local mobility improvements with the extension of Santa Fe Avenue.



Project and Technical Leadership Teams

6.2.2 Technical Leadership Team

6.2.2.1 Roles and Responsibilities

The TLT was made up of engineers, planners, and safety personnel from CDOT, the City of Pueblo, Pueblo County, PACOG, Colorado State Patrol, City Police, and the consultant team. The TLT provided input on technical issues and solutions throughout the study process. The TLT met monthly throughout the alternatives analysis process, and meeting notes were provided to the PLT to keep members up to date on the technical work of the project.

The roles and responsibilities of the TLT included:

- ❖ Guiding technical decisions involving data gathering, criteria, and analysis.
- ❖ Providing technical review of project reports.
- ❖ Providing technical support and insight involving agency issues and regulations.
- ❖ Coordinating and communicating with their respective agency staff and/or elected officials.
- ❖ Assisting in developing and screening project alternatives.

Representatives from the following organizations served as TLT members:

- ❖ CDOT Region 2 Resident Engineer
- ❖ CDOT Region 2 Environmental
- ❖ CDOT Region 2 Right-of-Way
- ❖ CDOT Region 2 Utilities
- ❖ CDOT Region 2 Traffic
- ❖ CDOT Region 2 Maintenance
- ❖ Pueblo Area Council of Governments
- ❖ City of Pueblo Transportation
- ❖ City of Pueblo Planning
- ❖ City of Pueblo Public Works
- ❖ City of Pueblo Parks and Recreation
- ❖ City of Pueblo Police
- ❖ Pueblo County Public Works
- ❖ Colorado State Patrol
- ❖ Consultant Team



Technical Leadership Team Discussion

6.2.2.2 Summary of the Technical Leadership Team Contributions

The TLT helped the CDOT Project Team work through the technical engineering and planning issues facing the team. Some of the important issues addressed, meeting discussions held, and input obtained through several TLT meetings are summarized below.

- ❖ Members of the TLT helped the CDOT Project Team with traffic forecasts for the study.
- ❖ The TLT helped the CDOT Project Team design workable connections between I-25 and the local road network.
- ❖ The TLT provided technical understanding of traffic circulation and gave insights on the typical points of origin of trips within the region and where popular destinations are located. Members helped the CDOT Project Team designers identify ways that an extended Dillon Drive would interface with US 50B. Solutions for improving local mobility in the vicinity of the Runyon Field Sports Complex were also discussed at TLT meetings.
- ❖ Discussions with the TLT led to eliminating Kelly Avenue in the lower Goat Hill Neighborhood and designing alternative access for the railroad tracks.
- ❖ The TLT helped the CDOT Project Team understand the long-term plans for extending Pueblo Boulevard and provided the team with ideas for connecting 29th Street to I-25.
- ❖ Maintenance responsibility for each of the project improvements had to be resolved during the study process. The TLT helped move the discussion forward

by providing recommendations to City and County management staff and members of the PLT.

- ❖ The TLT voiced a strong preference for the Modified I-25 Alternative (Preferred Alternative). The team thinks this alternative will result in increased connectivity throughout the Pueblo region largely because extending Santa Fe Avenue south will provide an alternative route for local trips. People will be able to drive north-south without accessing I-25.
- ❖ The TLT acknowledged the economic development opportunities for an extended Santa Fe Avenue, which the City sees as a project benefit.
- ❖ The CDOT Project Team worked diligently to avoid or minimize impacts to Mineral Palace Park and the Fountain Creek floodplain. The CDOT Project Team worked closely with the TLT to develop a variety of alternatives that would create the least impacts to these resources.
- ❖ The TLT facilitated coordination between the City and the CDOT Project Team in addressing drainage and water quality issues facing the project.
- ❖ The CDOT Project Team designed amenities such as bicycle and pedestrian trail connections into the project with the help of the TLT. The TLT helped identify utility corridors that could be available for constructing new trails.
- ❖ Creative solutions to address one-way and dead-end streets in the Bessemer Neighborhood were explored with the TLT, along with residents of the neighborhood.
- ❖ Although project designers strive to build improvements that meet national design standards, variations to those standards occasionally make better sense at certain locations. When the CDOT Project Team discovered ways to lessen impacts while maintaining roadway safety, the ideas were discussed and agreed upon by the TLT.

6.2.3 Community Working Groups

6.2.3.1 Roles and Responsibilities

Three CWGs, made up of local residents, were organized according to the segment along the I-25 corridor (North [Phase 1], Central [Phase 2], and South [Phase 2] area) that was closest to members' homes at the beginning of the project. The primary role for each CWG was to provide information on community values, goals, and transportation problems on its segment of I-25, and recommend potential

solutions to the CDOT Project Team during the alternatives analysis process.



Community Working Groups

Early in the project, each CWG met once per month for 2 hours to review and discuss issues specific to its segment. When issues overlapped at the boundaries of a segment,

joint CWG meetings were held to bring the group members to an understanding of each group's issues.



Open House

The CWG meetings were supplemented with open houses for the public at large. The open house forums were a venue for presenting the progress on the project and the work of the CWGs, as well as for gathering a larger public

EXHIBIT 6-1

Community Working Group Participants

Carol Alumbaugh	Kirk Davis	Garth Haigh	Andrea Lopez	Peter Roper	Catherine Tonne
Janice Anderson	Don Decesaro	Rick Hanger	Carol Loterbauer	Janice Roybal	Clara Torri
Todd Ahlenius	Tess Decesaro	Phil Harmann	Rita Lumley	Hannah Rush	Albert Torri
David Balsick	Ralph Dille	Claire Harmann	Dennis Mc Clure	Anthony Sabatini	Bill Trujillo
Frank Bergamo	Jo Donley	Jana Hart	James Mcgrath	Aldea Sabo	Larry Trujillo
James Billings	George Dwight	Anna Hegler	Karen Mcgrath	John Schnedler	Mary Lou Urenda
Janet Boyd	Russ Ellis	Ray Hegler	Virginia Mitchell	Carol Schnedler	Ben Valdez
Bonner Brice	Patty Ellis	Dave Hibbert	Janet Monack	Chester Sheets	Bill Vidmar
Cliff Brice	Clara Erwin	Dick Hobbs	Doris Morgan	H.L. Shriver	Barbara Vidmar
Erwin Burk	Paul Fanning	John Holiman	Chris Nielsen	Phyllis Sowell	Ray Warfield
Clara Burk	Wayne Farley	Edith Holiman	Clark Nielsen	Dennis Sowell	Aileen Warfield
Frances Burns	Mary Farley	Delores Horton	Bob Norris	John Spearing	Everett White
Louie Carleo	Sophie Faust	Kathryn Hume	Dorothy Olivier	Myles Standish	Kathie White
George Carr	Barb Ferrero	Fred Koury	Imogene Parsons	Frank Starginer	Bill Willging
Howard Carr	Peggy Fogel	Thomas Kladek	Todd Pasquin	John Starr	Jean Williams
Ernie Castro	Tony Gagliano	Frances Kladek	Frank Petrocco	Darlene Staruh	Paul Wright
Paul Conatore	Shirley Gagliano	Grant Koury	Helen Porter	Frank Stringer	

Source: CDOT Project Team, 2010.



Community Working Groups

perspective on transportation problems and potential solutions. The CWG participants are listed in **Exhibit 6-1**.

6.2.3.2 Summary of the Community Working Groups Contributions

The CWGs helped the CDOT Project Team understand the problems on I-25 through Pueblo. The list of transportation problems generated by these groups fed into the Purpose and Need statement for the project. Their comments and observations largely fell into a safety or mobility category and are noted below.

- ❖ The CWGs consistently mentioned that CDOT should either add more interchanges on I-25 or improve existing unsafe interchanges.
- ❖ The CWGs also noted some of the more critical safety issues such as the need to extend on/off ramps to allow for better acceleration and deceleration, the need to straighten curves on the highway to reduce truck accidents, and the need to widen I-25 to six lanes to provide improved local and regional mobility and accommodate future growth of traffic within and through Pueblo.
- ❖ The CWGs noted increasing noise levels along I-25 over the years and suggested that CDOT address aesthetic/landscaping issues, provide better lighting and signage, and construct I-25 improvements with limited impacts to adjacent neighborhoods.
- ❖ The list of transportation problems generated with the CWGs transformed into the Purpose and Need statement for this project.
- ❖ Early in the study process, goals and objectives for the project were formulated and outlined in a Community Vision Statement at community workshops. The CWGs

gave input into this vision, which also establishes a commitment of a continuing partnership between public agencies, citizens, and private developers to support, implement, and fund improvements. A copy of the full Community Vision Statement is provided in **Chapter 1 – Purpose and Need**.

- ❖ The issues identified at the CWG events helped the CDOT Project Team develop evaluation criteria used for the alternatives analysis that addressed community values, environmental concerns, mobility problems, and safety issues.

6.2.4 Park Advisory Committee

6.2.4.1 Mission, Roles, and Responsibilities

The PAC was made up of staff from the City Parks and Recreation Department, City Planning Department, County Parks Department, and citizens throughout the I-25 corridor. The group was formed to help City of Pueblo and Pueblo County staff and citizens understand the potential effects on Mineral Palace Park and Benedict Park from each of the alternatives. The PAC discussed options to avoid or minimize negative park impacts and explored ways the project might enhance these two community parks. Where effects were expected to be adverse, the PAC discussed ways that project impacts to Mineral Palace Park and Benedict Park could be mitigated. The PAC members became presenters at neighborhood workshops to discuss the process used to discuss potential park impacts and to describe mitigation strategies that the CDOT Project Team developed with the help of PAC members.

As the first order of business, the PAC crafted a mission to state its role as a special committee. The resulting mission was to:

“Develop park mitigation plans consistent with the vision and values of the Pueblo community, in the event that I-25 impacts parks.”

The group then proceeded to work on park issues consistent with its roles and responsibilities, which included:

- ❖ Helping the CDOT Project Team brainstorm ideas for avoiding or minimizing negative impacts to Mineral Palace Park and Benedict Park.
- ❖ Exploring design options to minimize expected impacts to Mineral Palace Park and Benedict Park.

- ❖ Discussing CDOT's goals, processes, and findings with their neighborhood groups and respective agencies.
- ❖ Presenting their neighborhood group's ideas and neighborhood values to the PAC.
- ❖ Providing input into the neighborhood workshop process and presentations.
- ❖ Participating in neighborhood workshops as an advocate for the park planning task.

Members of the PAC are listed in **Exhibit 6-2**.

EXHIBIT 6-2

Park Advisory Committee Members

Dick Annand, formerly CDOT

Dan Centa, City Transportation Department

David Cockrell, Historic Preservation Commission

Judy DeHaven, formerly CDOT

Bob Gilliland, City Parks and Recreation Department

Cathy Green, Formerly City Planning Department

Joe Kocman, Bessemer Neighborhood

Tony Langoni, Historic Arkansas River Project

Mark Lowrey, North Side Neighborhood

Steven Meier, City Planning Department

David Miller, formerly CDOT

Susan Tenbrink, North Side Neighborhood

Bob Torres, CDOT

George Williams, Pueblo County Historical Society

Jeff Woeber, County Planning Department

Rich Zajac, City Parks and Recreation Department

Bill Zwick, City Planning Department

Consultant Team

Source: CDOT Project Team, 2010.

6.2.4.2 Summary of the Park Advisory Committee Contributions

The PAC helped the CDOT Project Team work through issues regarding Mineral Palace Park and Benedict Park. Some of the important issues addressed through a series of PAC meetings are summarized below.

- ❖ Members of the PAC developed mission statements for Mineral Palace Park and Benedict Park. The mission statements are important to the residents and are intended to be relevant beyond the length of this study process.
- ❖ The PAC helped the CDOT Project Team understand the existing uses and shortfalls of the parks. City staff and residents each had their own list of items that could be improved.
- ❖ The PAC provided the CDOT Project Team with its city-wide view of parks and how they should be connected.
- ❖ The PAC was instrumental in the development of mitigation strategies. The group worked to ensure that a mitigation strategy was in place to address each potential park impact.
- ❖ The PAC helped the CDOT Project Team understand the trails and their linkages around the City. The idea to link Mineral Palace Park to the Fountain Creek Trail by constructing a pedestrian bridge over I-25 was initiated by the PAC and incorporated into the project mitigation plans.
- ❖ Maintenance and operation of the park improvements was discussed at length during PAC meetings. The City had to assure residents that it has the ability to maintain and operate park improvements after they are constructed by CDOT.
- ❖ Citizen members of the PAC are active participants in the neighborhood groups where they live. Information and communication was shared between their neighborhood groups and the PAC. This inspired neighbors to get involved in the project public meetings.
- ❖ The PAC stated that the Modified I-25 Alternative (Preferred Alternative) is preferred over the Existing I-25 Alternative. The group knows firsthand the efforts the CDOT Project Team made to avoid and minimize impacts to parks. It believes that the mitigation measures that have been developed for the parks and committed to in this FEIS will be built into the project and will result in better park conditions than exist today. Specifically, it believes the relocation of Benedict Park

will result in a more user-friendly, small neighborhood park with safer pedestrian access. The new trail connections that will be made between Benedict Park and JJ Raigoza Park will add trail amenities to the neighborhoods.

6.3 AGENCY COORDINATION

A Notice of Intent was published in the *Federal Register* in February 2003 to announce the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) intent to prepare the DEIS. Following this announcement, two scoping meetings were held to solicit a range of alternatives, impacts, and issues to be addressed in the DEIS. One scoping meeting was held on February 13, 2003, in the FHWA office at 555 Zang Street, Lakewood, Colorado, and the second was held February 27, 2003, at the Interim Library Conference Room at 701 Court Street, Pueblo, Colorado. The meeting summaries and list of attendees are presented in **Appendix B. Exhibit 6-3** lists the agencies that sent staff to attend each meeting. There are no participating or cooperating agencies. Based on the information in **Section 3.24 Required Permits and Approvals**, these

agencies will be involved during design and construction.

Chapter 8 – List of EIS Recipients identifies the agencies that were provided this FEIS for review and comment.

In addition to the scoping meetings, further agency coordination resulted in a MOU between the City of Pueblo and CDOT, signed on March 24, 2010 (see **Appendix F**). This agreement documents respective understandings of future ownership and maintenance responsibilities for the anticipated improvements associated with the New Pueblo Freeway project.

Discussions with Colorado Parks and Wildlife and the U.S. Department of the Interior have included review of avoidance alternatives, proposed mitigation measures, and future compliance with Section 6(f) requirements for the Section 6(f)(3) assisted properties that would be affected by the project. Coordination with these agencies is documented in **Appendix B**. CDOT will ensure there is an equal value exchange for all Section 6(f)(3) property acquired.

EXHIBIT 6-3

Agencies Represented at Scoping Meetings

February 13, 2003 Meeting Invited Agency Staff	February 27, 2003 Meeting Invited Agency Staff
FHWA	FHWA
CDOT Region 2	CDOT Region 2
CDOT Environmental Programs	Bessemer Historical Society
Advisory Council on Historic Preservation*	City of Pueblo*
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	Colorado Parks and Wildlife* (formerly Colorado Division of Wildlife)
Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment	Pueblo Area Council of Governments
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency	Pueblo County
Federal Emergency Management Agency	Pueblo County Historical Society
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers*
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development*	
State Historic Preservation Office*	

Source: CDOT Project Team, 2010.

CDOT = Colorado Department of Transportation FHWA = Federal Highway Administration

*Agencies that were invited but did not attend the scoping meeting.

6.3.1 Key Issues and Pertinent Information Received From Scoping Agencies

The following key issues and pertinent information regarding the study were received during the scoping meetings with

agency staff. CDOT's response to these issues, and the location of additional information, can be found in **Exhibit 6-4**.

EXHIBIT 6-4

Agencies Represented at Scoping Meetings (February 2003)

Key Issues and Pertinent Information	CDOT Response to Key Issues
The issue of air toxins should be addressed pursuant to requirements from CDPHE's Air Pollution Control Division.	CDOT followed the standard FHWA guidance for mobile-source air toxins (MSATs). Impacts to air quality and proposed mitigations are discussed in detail in Section 3.10 Air Quality .
The extension of Dillon Drive needs to be addressed in the DEIS.	Each Build Alternative includes the extension of Dillon Drive north to US 50B. A description of the Build Alternatives, including the Dillon Drive extension, is included in Chapter 2 – Alternatives .
Examine how traffic will shift between Mesa Avenue and Northern Avenue, and how traffic-calming techniques such as signage and speed bumps can be used to reduce unwanted cut-through traffic.	Traffic-calming ideas were discussed in public meetings. Operations of the roadway network are discussed in detail in Section 3.1 Transportation .
Ensure neighborhoods surrounding parks in the I-25 corridor are included in impact discussions. Include an assessment of potential noise impacts on Mineral Palace Park.	Impacts to parks in the corridor and proposed mitigation are discussed in detail in Section 3.3 Parks and Recreation . Noise impacts were also evaluated and are summarized in Section 3.5 Noise .
The CDOT Project Team should be aware that the Pueblo Historic Preservation Commission regulates demolition of historic properties.	Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act consultation has been completed. Impacts to historic properties in the corridor and proposed mitigations are discussed in detail in Section 3.2 Historic Properties .
It may be difficult to get citizen participation in the process in areas where homes are not owner occupied.	Various methods of public outreach were employed to best reach the widest geographic area. These methods are discussed in detail in Section 6.4.
Numerous studies of Fountain Creek are underway.	The CDOT Project Team conducted the floodway analyses using the Federal Emergency Management Agency's stringent floodway criteria and Executive Order 11988 "Floodplain Management." Impacts to floodplains in the corridor and proposed mitigations are discussed in detail in Section 3.14 Floodplains . The DEIS incorporates the most recent updates available on Fountain Creek at the time of DEIS publication.
Exercise care when delineating wetlands and do not base analysis solely on current hydrology.	The CDOT Project Team used the <i>Wetlands Delineation Manual</i> (USACE, 1987) to identify and locate wetlands in the project corridor. A detailed discussion of the wetlands is located in Section 3.7 Wetlands .

Source: CDOT Project Team, 2010.

CDOT = Colorado Department of Transportation
CDPHE = Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment
DEIS = Draft Environmental Impact Statement

FHWA = Federal Highway Administration
USACE = U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

6.4 OTHER OPPORTUNITIES TO PARTICIPATE

To encourage public involvement from a wider geographic area, the CDOT Project Team employed custom-designed public outreach methods. Traditionally under-represented in these types of planning projects, low-income, minority, elderly, and other special populations were targeted with opportunities to participate. Engaging these groups required a number of specialized events, including the following:

- ❖ A public hearing following the release of the DEIS
- ❖ Large community open houses at convenient locations
- ❖ Day-long community workshops
- ❖ Small informal neighborhood workshops in local schools and churches
- ❖ Business and civic group organization gatherings
- ❖ Business owner one-on-one interviews
- ❖ Issue-focused meetings
- ❖ Individual meetings with home and business owners
- ❖ An information booth at the annual Colorado State Fair (booth was set up in 2000, 2001, and 2002)
- ❖ Meetings with high school senior classes to generate “out-of-the box” ideas
- ❖ Engagement of elementary school students in developing park ideas
- ❖ Involvement of middle school students in an open house event on the historic context of the region
- ❖ Meetings with the local Historic Preservation Commission and the Bessemer Historical Society Steelworks Museum
- ❖ Participation in Pueblo neighborhood events such as the Bessemer Pack-the-Park
- ❖ Door-to-door invitation effort for one entire neighborhood
- ❖ Spanish-speaking interpreters available on request at public meetings
- ❖ Paid taxi service available to transport elderly residents to meetings
- ❖ City billboards used to advertise upcoming project events and the project website
- ❖ TV videos on the project to air on public access television
- ❖ Telephone hot line
- ❖ Interactive website

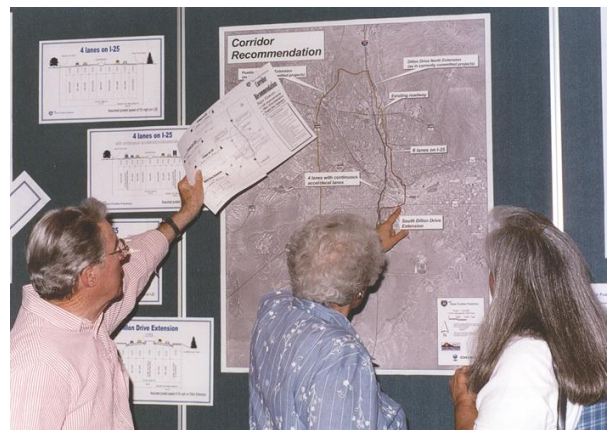
- ❖ Community-wide mailings
- ❖ Focused mailings to affected groups
- ❖ Paid *Pueblo Chieftain* newspaper articles on project status
- ❖ Driving tours of I-25

Local media also played a role in informing the public about the project by providing extensive newspaper coverage, a local talk radio show, and a brief film shown on the public access TV station.

6.4.1 Open Houses

Open houses are a gathering of stakeholders without an agenda that typically last 4 to 6 hours. Open houses are designed to give individuals time to discuss their personal project-related issues with CDOT Project Team members. Participants can arrive at their convenience and stay as long as needed to get their questions answered. Stations are set up for each of the issues under consideration, and each station has a project member to answer questions. Participants are asked to leave their comments on large paper pads at each station or on comment sheets that can be mailed later to the CDOT Project Team.

Ten open houses were held with a total of 944 stakeholders attending. These events were held at project milestones and when information was available on alternative corridor alignments, alternative interchange locations, and the proposed park mitigation plans. In an open house on historical resources, middle school children made presentations to help the general public understand the historic context of the Pueblo region.



Open House

6.4.2 Community Workshops

Community workshops are a gathering of stakeholders, generally lasting 6 to 8 hours, with a structured agenda and a defined outcome. Workshops are designed to set overarching project goals and visions by bringing together stakeholders with diverse backgrounds and issues to meet and discuss their common concerns and goals. Workshops can involve both large and small group sessions. Large group sessions provide the opportunity to present information to a wide audience, while small group sessions encourage more in-depth discussion.

Four community workshops were held during the project. The first workshop gathered together more than 60 stakeholders to create the Community Vision for the project (see **Chapter 1 – Purpose and Need, Exhibit 1-7**). This meeting was held on a Saturday and kicked off the public involvement process. Other workshops addressed potential highway interchange locations and interchange types.



Community Workshop

6.4.3 Neighborhood Workshops

Neighborhood workshops are places where community members can influence design to create a project that is in harmony with the natural and built environment. These meetings gather neighbors together to discuss issues affecting where they live, work, and play. Workshops are small, with usually less than 30 participants. They begin with a short presentation on a specific neighborhood issue and end with a two-way dialog with CDOT Project Team members. Workshops are effective in helping the CDOT Project Team to understand a neighborhood's position, goals, and needs. They are also a good way to identify the

improvements that would be valued by the community as a lasting asset.

In all, 23 neighborhood workshops were held. One of these was conducted in the Grove Neighborhood to discuss the possible acquisition of properties for the project as a result of the realignment options for I-25. This neighborhood of 34 homes is currently isolated from other residential and commercial areas because it is surrounded by I-25 on the west and the Runyon Field Sports Complex (a regional baseball facility) on the east. The workshop ended with residents agreeing that it would be best to purchase every home in the neighborhood if the project required acquisition of homes in the western half of the neighborhood. The group said that leaving only a few homes in the eastern half of the neighborhood would degrade and further isolate the neighborhood.

At another workshop, the residents of the East Bessemer Neighborhood voiced their concerns about losing Santa Fe Drive as a direct route to downtown. This concern prompted designers to “go back to the drawing board” and look for other solutions. The result is a proposed extension of Stanton Avenue, including a new bridge over the Arkansas River. The new road would provide a direct route to downtown and greatly improve access to the Runyon Field Sports Complex.

6.4.4 Business Organization Gatherings

Business group meetings take advantage of regularly scheduled meetings of business organizations such as Chambers of Commerce and Rotary Clubs. These lunch-hour meetings provide opportunities to obtain input from the business community.

Members of the CDOT Project Team, PLT, and TLT attended these meetings. Focused presentations on the benefits and impacts of alternatives spoke to the heart of this group's concern: “How will access to downtown be affected?” With the business community's support, implementation of the project will eliminate an existing I-25 interchange in downtown.

One-on-one interviews were held with some of the business owners who could potentially be impacted by either of the two Build Alternatives. The interviews were focused on understanding the nature of the business, the characteristics of the employees, and the ability for the

businesses to relocate within Pueblo. It also provided an opportunity to discuss the project, explain the Build Alternatives, and answer any questions the business owners wanted to discuss.

6.4.5 Issue-Focused Meetings

Issue-focused meetings are announced through a general mailing. The meetings are similar in format to neighborhood workshops, with an attendance typically less than 30.

Issue-focused meetings were called to address topics related to potential park effects, park mitigation strategies, and corridor aesthetic concerns and goals. Elementary school children also were involved in helping with generating ideas for the parks.

6.4.6 Individual Meetings

Individual meetings are used to discuss issues and potential impacts to individual homes and businesses. Individual meetings are held when a proposed improvement could be designed in different ways, resulting in different impacts to private property. These meetings allow property owners to receive one-on-one attention when their property potentially could be affected by the project. Designers talk with owners about ways to minimize acquisition and/or access issues, while CDOT ROW staff discuss ROW laws and procedures. The personalized nature of these meetings allows for candid conversations about property acquisition and access changes.

As an example of how these meetings worked, the CDOT Project Team met with event center owners on Albany Avenue at 11th Street. Currently, the owners have access to back buildings from Albany Street. The CDOT Project Team changed the highway design to move the southbound frontage road closer to I-25 near their businesses, thereby allowing a parking lot next to their buildings and providing access to the back buildings.

6.4.7 State Fair Booth

The Colorado State Fair is held annually in Pueblo and hosts thousands of visitors. From 2000 through 2002, the CDOT Project Team had a booth near the west entrance to the fair that displayed a large aerial photograph of the study area. During the first year, comments and ideas for improvements were collected from visitors who stopped by the booth. During the second year, the suggestions were

displayed on an aerial photograph. During the third year, the booth displayed a blue ribbon given to the citizens of Pueblo from Colorado Governor Bill Owens for their participation as regional citizens. The honor was given to Pueblo citizens for thinking beyond personal interests and working for the greater community good. Furthermore, the New Pueblo Freeway was declared “a model of excellence” in public involvement by Governor Owens.



State Fair Booth

6.4.8 Meetings with High School Seniors

Local high school students represent the future users of I-25; meeting with a civics class composed of high school seniors gave the CDOT Project Team the opportunity to hear some “out-of-the-box” ideas. Although many comments focused on improving traffic speed on the highway, the students also discussed how improvements to I-25 could improve economic opportunities within the City. An unexpected benefit came when students went home and discussed the session with their parents. After the high school event, several parents attended public meetings because of their students’ interest in the topic.

6.4.9 Meetings with Local Historic Groups

Meetings with local historic groups ranged from general project updates to focused issue discussions. The Pueblo Historic Preservation Commission, Historic Pueblo Inc., and Bessemer Historical Society Steelworks Museum meetings focused on the historic resources and treasures in Pueblo. The Pueblo Historic Preservation Commission and Bessemer Historical Society staff helped project historians develop the area of potential effect (APE) and gave their endorsement of the APE. The APE is used by historians to

define the area where they will assess potential impacts of each of the proposed alternatives on historic resources. The Pueblo Historic Preservation Commission and the Bessemer Historical Society were also interested in the mitigation plans for the historic Mineral Palace Park, and they have since endorsed the recommended plan because it supports the historic resources within the park and of the park itself.

6.4.10 Neighborhood Events

Neighborhood events such as barbeques, street fairs, church parties, school fundraisers, and other activities occur throughout the year and offer a way to “get to know” people. Large or small, these gatherings provide for true grassroots involvement that can lead to a comfort level greater than in more formal settings like public meetings.

These events were an opportunity for the CDOT Project Team to get to know individuals along the I-25 corridor in an informal non-meeting environment and spark public interest in the project. The CDOT Project Team met people at these social events who later attended public meetings.

One neighborhood event visited by the CDOT Project Team was the Pack-the-Park event in the Bessemer Neighborhood, where citizens were able to talk one-on-one with CDOT Project Team members about the project.

6.4.11 Door-to-Door Visits

Door-to-door visits are seldom used to contact citizens primarily due to the expense and potential safety issues for citizens as well as the CDOT Project Team members. However, when a localized issue needs to be addressed, such visits are the best way to encourage participation in select situations.

As engineers worked on design options for I-25 south of Abriendo Avenue, it became clear that 3 blocks of homes west of I-25 in the Bessemer Neighborhood could be affected in a unique way. Both Build Alternatives would move I-25 east and further away from the backs of the

homes along Evans Avenue. In terms of the impacts from the road, the homes would be in a better physical setting than they are today. However, moving I-25 east would leave a strip of land between the alley behind the homes and a proposed noise wall. The CDOT Project Team recognized that the extra land could present a safety issue because the shadow from the wall would limit day- and night-time light and create a dark and possibly dangerous area.

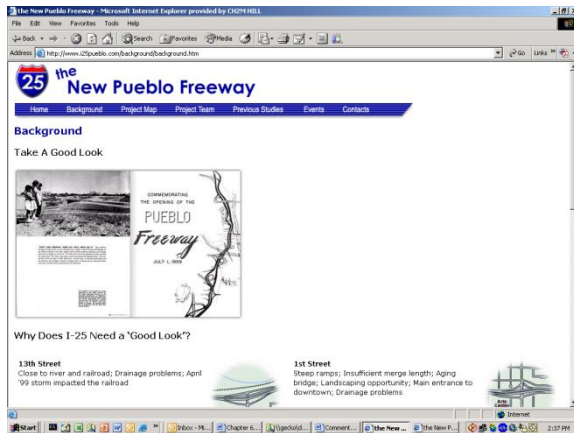
A neighborhood workshop was held, and those attending were presented with a design proposal to use the alley and the strip of land for a landscaped and lighted bicycle/pedestrian trail. Access to the trail would be restricted to pedestrians, bicyclists, and utility maintenance vehicles. This limited access would eliminate the ability for homeowners to use the alley to access their own back yards. The group at the meeting agreed with the proposal even though it eliminated their alley access. To ensure that all homeowners, including those that did not attend the meeting, could live with this choice, a door-to-door visit by CDOT Project Team members provided the opportunity to talk with all homeowners on these 3 blocks about this design change.

6.4.12 Hot Line

More than 2,000 calls were made to the hot line or to team members during the study. The majority of callers were concerned citizens who wanted more detail about the study as it related to their properties. These citizens often requested a meeting with an engineer to gain detailed information regarding specific locations and the impacts of the alternatives under consideration. Approximately 30 to 40 percent of the calls were from citizens concerned about the effect of the project on their specific needs. Some callers were not comfortable calling their City and County representatives, or were not inclined to write letters, but were able to call the hot line. All calls were responded to by CDOT Project Team members.

6.4.13 Website

A website (www.i25pueblo.com) was constructed specifically for the New Pueblo Freeway project. Data are not available to determine the web page usage; however, previous experience on other projects in the region and feedback from local citizens indicate that this was an effective way for citizens to obtain project information.



New Pueblo Freeway Website (www.i25pueblo.com)

6.4.14 Brochures/Flyers

Flyers were produced for open houses that detailed the alternatives under consideration at that specific time in the alternatives analysis process. A brochure was produced detailing the project process and celebrating the community's involvement in the public process.

6.4.15 News Coverage and Public Notices

News coverage of the New Pueblo Freeway project was extensive and included the following:

- ❖ **News Stories.** The majority of 13 major stories about the study appeared on the front page of the *Pueblo Chieftain*. Six stories were published in the *Pueblo Business Journal*, and one article was published in the *Senior Beacon*.
- ❖ **Letters to the Editor.** Six letters to the editor and two replies from the CDOT Project Team were published in the *Pueblo Chieftain*.
- ❖ **Newspaper Ads.** Ads for open houses, workshops, and eight CWG meetings appeared in the *Pueblo Chieftain*.
- ❖ **City Billboards.** When available, city billboards were used to advertise upcoming project events and to

provide the project website address for citizens to find out more about the project.

- ❖ **Community-wide Mailings.** To advertise open houses and community workshops, community-wide mailings were mailed to homes in advance of meetings to invite attendees.
- ❖ **Driving Tours.** Several agencies outside of Pueblo are involved in overseeing the project. To help agencies become more familiar with I-25 through Pueblo and understand the urban setting, several driving tours were provided by CDOT staff.
- ❖ **Downtown Association Newsletter.** This organization published seven stories about the project.
- ❖ **Pueblo Chamber of Commerce Newsletter.** The Chamber published three articles during the study.

6.4.16 Television and Radio

The study received eight mentions and news interviews on television stations KOAA, KRDO, and KKTU. CDOT Project Team members Bill Knapp, David Miller, Bob Torres, and Mary Jo Vobejda were on camera for some of these stories.

Radio station KCSJ broadcast three news stories focusing on the study and announced every open house and workshop. David Miller was the guest on one of these shows.

One highly effective method used by the CDOT Project Team was to provide project information for television broadcast through two 8-minute educational videos. The videos played twice per day for 3 years on community access stations. As needed, the videos are updated to reflect current information. Evidence of the videos' success as a simple communication tool comes from the weekly phone calls to the telephone hot line and visits to the project website for more information.

6.5 PUBLIC MEETINGS AND TOPICS COVERED

Exhibit 6-5 presents a topic summary of each meeting held with a neighborhood, CWG, business group, or the entire community. The topics parallel the decisions being discussed at the TLT and PLT meetings. Total attendance at these meetings has been nearly 2,900 attendees. Records of attendance at meetings, written comments, and verbal comments are on file and available for review at the CDOT Region 2 office at 905 Erie Avenue, Pueblo, Colorado 81001.

EXHIBIT 6-5**Public Meetings Held for I-25 New Pueblo Freeway Project**

Dates	Forum	Topics Covered	Attendance	Target Audience Notification Method
July 6, 2000	Open House	General introduction of Project to community	142	Open/Newspaper ads and general mailing
August 12, 2000	Community Workshop	Introduced Project, discussed concerns, discussed corridor segment group limits	68	Open/Newspaper ads and general mailing
August 19 to September 4, 2000	State Fair	Gathered community issues and concerns	N/A	None, event organized by others
September 5 to September 7, 2000	CWG	Developed Vision	50	Open/Newspaper announcements and CWG mailing
September 19 to September 21, 2000	CWG	Listed concerns	44	Open/Newspaper announcements and CWG mailing
October 3 to October 5, 2000	CWG	Developed screening criteria	39	Open/Newspaper announcements and CWG mailing
October 24 to October 26, 2000	CWG	Brainstormed ideas	31	Open/Newspaper announcements and CWG mailing
November 8 to November 9, 2000	CWG	Reviewed criteria; discussed funding process	25	Open/Newspaper announcements and CWG mailing
December 5 to December 7, 2000	CWG	Conducted first screening of ideas; discussed interchange overview	32	Open/Newspaper announcements and CWG mailing
January 17 to January 18, 2001	CWG	Finalized screening of ideas, defined major concepts, and conducted screening of concepts	40	Open/Newspaper announcements and CWG mailing
February 14 to February 15, 2001	CWG	Finalized screening of concepts; finalized major concepts	33	Open/Newspaper announcements and CWG mailing
March 14 to March 15, 2001	CWG	Screened strategies	31	Open/Newspaper announcements and CWG mailing
April 25, 2001	CWG	Screened strategy results, developed corridor recommendation	39	Open/Newspaper announcements and CWG mailing
May 16, 2001	CWG	Finalized corridor recommendation	32	Open/Newspaper announcements and CWG mailing
May 24, 2001	Open House	Announced corridor recommendation	108	Open/Newspaper ads and general mailing
June 16, 2001	Community Workshop	Potential Interchange Location Workshop	39	Open/Newspaper ads and general mailing
July 28, 2001	Community Workshop	Potential Interchange Type Workshop	79	Open/Newspaper ads and general mailing

EXHIBIT 6-5**Public Meetings Held for I-25 New Pueblo Freeway Project**

Dates	Forum	Topics Covered	Attendance	Target Audience Notification Method
August 6, 2001	Neighborhood Workshop	Bessemer Neighborhood Meeting	30	Neighborhood/Personal mailing
August 8, 2001	CWG	Prepared for open house	38	Open/Newspaper ads and general mailing
August 15, 2001	Open House	Announced interchange recommendations and path forward	130	Open/Newspaper ads and general mailing
August 22, 2001	Business Group	Downtown Association Meeting	45	Downtown/group's regular meeting announcement
August 23, 2001	Business Group	Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors Meeting	18	Business owners/group's regular meeting announcement
August 26, 2001	Business Group	YMCA Board Meeting to discuss downtown interchange alternatives	12	YMCA operators by appointment
August 18 to September 3, 2001	State Fair	Presented alternative interchange locations	N/A	None, event organized by others
October 15 to October 17, 2001	Individual Meetings	US 50B to Stem Beach: discussed ROW impacts	60	Adjacent property owners/personal invitations with follow-up calls
October 16, 2001	Neighborhood Workshop	Grove Neighborhood: presented alternative alignments that impact neighborhood	20	The Grove Neighborhood/personal invitations with follow-up calls
October 22 to October 24, 2001	Individual Meetings	US 50B to Stem Beach: discussed ROW impacts	40	Adjacent property owners/personal invitations with follow-up calls
November 14, 2001	Business Group	Urban Renewal Authority Project update	15	Urban renewal authority members/group's regular meeting announcement
November 14, 2001	Business Group	<i>Chieftain</i> Editorial Board Meeting Project update	6	Editorial staff of the <i>Pueblo Chieftain</i> /by appointment
November 14, 2001	Neighborhood Workshop	Discussed interchange options at 29th Street and US 50B	62	Open/Newspaper ads and general mailing
December 3, 2001	Business Group	Rotary Presentation: Project update	102	Rotary members/group's regular meeting announcement
December 6, 2001	Local Agency Meeting	PACOG TTC/ CAC: presented Project progress	24	PACOG/regular meeting
December 11, 2001	Business Workshop	Chamber Workshop: Project update	15	Chamber members/groups regular meeting announcement
December 27, 2001	Business Workshop	Chamber Workshop: Project update	17	Chamber members/groups regular meeting announcement
December 28, 2001	Neighborhood Workshop	29th Street Neighborhood: discussed alternative at 29th Street and US 50B with State Representative Abel Tapia	180	Open/Newspaper ads and general mailing

EXHIBIT 6-5**Public Meetings Held for I-25 New Pueblo Freeway Project**

Dates	Forum	Topics Covered	Attendance	Target Audience Notification Method
June 3, 2002	Local Agency Meeting	PACOG TTC/CAC: presented traffic forecasts	30	PACOG/regular meeting
January 15, 2002	Individual Meetings:	US 50B to 29th Street: discussed ROW and access	27	Adjacent property owners/personal invitations with follow-up calls
January 24, 2002	Business Meeting	Downtown Association: Project update	15	Businesses/group's regular meeting announcement
January 24, 2002	Local Agency Meeting	PACOG Board of Directors Meeting: Project update	22	PACOG/regular meeting
February 5, 2002	Open House	Presented recommended corridor and interchange layouts	96	Open/Newspaper ads and general mailing
March 13, 2002	Community Workshop	Presented recommended long-range plan for I-25 north of Eagleridge	11	Open/Newspaper ads and general mailing
April 23, 2002	CWG	Discussed aesthetic and park solutions	16	Open/Newspaper announcements and CWG mailing
April 24, 2002	CWG	Discussed aesthetic and park solutions	21	Open/Newspaper announcements and CWG mailing
April 25, 2002	CWG	Discussed aesthetic and park solutions	17	Open/Newspaper announcements and CWG mailing
August 2001	Neighborhood Events	Pack-the-Park – a Bessemer Neighborhood Ice Cream Social: gathered comments on alternatives	NA	None, event organized by others
August 17 to September 1, 2002	State Fair	Presented the alternatives and Blue Ribbon from Governor Owens to citizens of Pueblo	NA	None, event organized by others
October 8, 2002	Issue Focused Meeting	Discussed aesthetic solutions	28	Open/Newspaper announcements and CWG mailing
December 3, 2002	Issue Focused Meeting	Discussed aesthetic and park solutions	28	Open/Newspaper announcements and CWG mailing
February 19, 2003	Open House	Presented three alternatives	74	General mailing and newspaper ads
May 17, 2003	Neighborhood Workshop	Presented alternatives to neighborhood groups	77	Open/Newspaper announcements and neighborhood mailing
June 4, 2003	Neighborhood Workshop	29th Street and Mineral Palace Park Neighborhood: discussed alternatives and asked for input	47	Adjacent property owners/personal invitations with follow-up calls

EXHIBIT 6-5**Public Meetings Held for I-25 New Pueblo Freeway Project**

Dates	Forum	Topics Covered	Attendance	Target Audience Notification Method
June 5, 2003	Neighborhood Workshop	Downtown: discussed alternatives and asked for input	22	Adjacent property owners/personal invitations with follow-up calls
June 10, 2003	Neighborhood Workshop	Grove Neighborhood and Moffat Neighborhood: discussed alternatives and asked for input	28	Adjacent property owners/personal invitations with follow-up calls
June 11, 2003	Neighborhood Workshop	East Bessemer Neighborhood: discussed alternatives and asked for input	17	Adjacent property owners/personal invitations with follow-up calls
June 12, 2003	Neighborhood Workshop	Indiana Street south: discussed alternatives and asked for input	23	Adjacent property owners/personal invitations with follow-up calls
July 8, 2003	Neighborhood Workshop	Dillon Drive and Creekside Neighbors: discussed alternatives and asked for input	28	Adjacent property owners/personal invitations with follow-up calls
July 9, 2003	Neighborhood Workshop	Bessemer Neighborhood: discussed alternatives and asked for input	13	Adjacent property owners/personal invitations with follow-up calls
August 4, 2003	Neighborhood Workshop	29th Street and Mineral Palace Park: discussed alternatives and asked for input	20	Adjacent property owners/personal invitations with follow-up calls
August 5, 2003	Neighborhood Workshop	Grove Neighborhood and Moffat Neighborhood: discussed alternatives and asked for input	26	Adjacent property owners/personal invitations with follow-up calls
August 6, 2003	Neighborhood Workshop	Bessemer Neighborhood: discussed alternatives and asked for input	14	Adjacent property owners/personal invitations with follow-up calls
August 7, 2003	Neighborhood Workshop	Indiana Street south: discussed alternatives and asked for input	52	Adjacent property owners/personal invitations with follow-up calls
December 18, 2003	Park Advisory Committee	Opened the Park Advisory Process	19	Open/Newspaper announcements and PAC mailing
January 7, 2004	Park Advisory Committee	Discussed goals for Mineral Palace Park	16	Open/Newspaper announcements and PAC mailing
January 28, 2004	Park Advisory Committee	Discussed goals for Benedict Park	19	Open/Newspaper announcements and PAC mailing
January 29, 2004	Neighborhood Workshop	Moffat Neighborhood: discussed alternatives and asked for input	42	Adjacent property owners/personal invitations with follow-up calls
February 4, 2004	Neighborhood Workshop	Mineral Palace Park: discussed park plans and asked for input	25	Adjacent property owners/personal invitations with follow-up calls

EXHIBIT 6-5**Public Meetings Held for I-25 New Pueblo Freeway Project**

Dates	Forum	Topics Covered	Attendance	Target Audience Notification Method
February 11, 2004	Park Advisory Committee	Discussed alternatives for Mineral Palace Park	16	Open/Newspaper announcements and PAC mailing
February 17, 2004	Neighborhood Workshop	Mineral Palace Park: discussed park plans and asked for input	25	Adjacent property owners/personal invitations with follow-up calls
February 25, 2004	Park Advisory Committee	Discussed alternatives for Benedict Park	15	Open/Newspaper announcements and PAC mailing
March 3, 2004	Neighborhood Workshop	Benedict Park: discussed park plans and asked for input	50	Adjacent property owners/personal invitations with follow-up calls
March 16, 2004	Park Advisory Committee	Discussed Preferred Alternative for Mineral Palace Park	14	Adjacent property owners/personal invitations with follow-up calls
March 24, 2004	Neighborhood Workshop	Mineral Palace Park: discussed park plans and asked for input	24	Adjacent property owners/personal invitations with follow-up calls
April 7, 2004	Neighborhood Workshop	Grove and Moffat Neighborhoods: discussed alternatives and asked for input	44	Adjacent property owners/personal invitations with follow-up calls
April 21, 2004	Park Advisory Committee	Discussed Preferred Alternative for Benedict Park	12	Adjacent property owners/personal invitations with follow-up calls
April 28, 2004	Open House	Presented park plans for both Mineral Palace Park and Benedict Park	88	Open/Newspaper announcements and general mailing
September 15, 2004	Neighborhood Workshop	Evans Avenue Workshop: discussed impacts of the alternatives to the alley and asked for input	11	Adjacent property owners/personal invitations with follow-up calls
October 2004	Door-to-Door	Discussed September 15, 2004 workshop and impact to their properties	NA	Post cards mailed to property owners on Evans Avenue announcing days and time when visits would occur
October 12, 2005	Open House	Presented findings from survey of 1,100 potentially historic properties, a video of a PACOG meeting, HARP projects, and midtown redevelopment	88	Open/Newspaper announcements and general mailing
July 28, 2007	Open House	Discussed the aesthetic possibilities for the New Pueblo Freeway and presented a review of the project status	52	Open/Newspaper announcements and general mailing
December 3, 2008	Open House	Presented finalized concepts from the aesthetic guidelines and an overview of the project status	106	Open/Newspaper announcements and general mailing

EXHIBIT 6-5**Public Meetings Held for I-25 New Pueblo Freeway Project**

Dates	Forum	Topics Covered	Attendance	Target Audience Notification Method
December 8, 2011	Public Hearing	Public Hearing during the circulation of the DEIS	167	Open/Newspaper announcements and general mailing
September 27, 2012	Local Agency Meeting	PACOG Board of Directors Meeting: Project update	50	PACOG/regular meeting
March 2, 2013	Open House	Presented concepts for aesthetic design for the Ilex Bridge project	60	Open/Newspaper announcements and general mailing
TBD	Public Hearing	Public Hearing during the circulation of the FEIS	TBD	Open/Newspaper announcements and general mailing

Source: CDOT Project Team, 2013.

CAC = Citizen Advisory Committee

DEIS = Draft Environmental Impact Statement

HARP = Historic Arkansas Riverwalk of Pueblo

PACOG = Pueblo Area Council of Governments

TTC = Transportation Technical Committee

CWG = Community Working Groups

FEIS = Final Environmental Impact Statement

PAC = Park Advisory Committee

ROW = right-of-way

6.5.1 Summary of the Public's Contributions

Using the various methods described in this chapter to communicate with the public, the CDOT Project Team worked through a variety of design and planning issues that were considered important to Pueblo residents. Some of the issues addressed through public contacts are summarized below.

- ❖ When designing the alignments for the Build Alternatives, the study team visited citizens in the Grove Neighborhood to get input into the proposed alignments. The residents acknowledged that the original construction of I-25 in the 1950s severed their group of homes from their Grove neighbors on the west side of I-25. They were cut off from neighborhood commercial businesses and now make up a small isolated community of 34 houses. The CDOT Project Team showed this group alternative widening alignments that could impact homes nearest to the highway. The citizens strongly objected to being subjected to any more divisions of their neighborhood from roadway improvements. They stated that if the project was going to impact even a few of the homes, CDOT should buy out the entire 34 houses and relocate residents to other areas within Pueblo.
- ❖ At each of the project public meetings held from 2000 to the present, the CDOT Project Team has consistently

heard that the residents of Pueblo want to see the Modified I-25 Alternative (Preferred Alternative) built, and they want CDOT to construct the improvements as soon as possible. The most common reasons cited by citizens include the following:

- Meetings between the CDOT Project Team and the Bessemer Neighborhood resulted in the design extension of Stanton Avenue to facilitate local travel within the Runyon Field Sports Complex area.
- Citizens are excited about the opportunities to stay off the highway for more of their local trips. The extension of Santa Fe Avenue will allow easier north-south travel on local roads.
- Citizens told the CDOT Project Team that the Modified I-25 Alternative (Preferred Alternative) best meets the Community Vision that they developed at the beginning of the study process. This community vision has been included in **Chapter 1 – Purpose and Need**.
- The citizens of Pueblo take pride in the beauty of Mineral Palace Park and cherish the role the park has played in the history of their City. They have been extremely vocal with the CDOT Project Team regarding the importance of this park. Residents of the neighborhood around the park, along with

citizens throughout the region, are committed to protecting their park. Through a series of public meetings, they have been active participants in developing mitigation strategies that will address the impacts expected from widening I-25 next to the park. Commitments between CDOT and the City to fully implement the mitigations described in this DEIS will be carefully scrutinized by the citizens. They will not let the mitigation strategies developed for Mineral Palace Park be eliminated or reduced due to costs to the project. To ensure this, the citizens developed a resolution stating adherence to these commitments for City Council to pass at one of their council meetings.

- ❖ The citizens believe that the Modified I-25 Alternative (Preferred Alternative) does a good job of improving east-west roadway and pedestrian connections between neighborhoods. This will be further enhanced by development of the pedestrian bridge over I-25 that will link Mineral Palace Park to the Fountain Creek Trail.
- ❖ In 2013, the City Council of Pueblo, PACOG, and the Pueblo County Commissioners each expressed support and preference for the Modified I-25 Alternative as the Preferred Alternative in formal resolutions, which can be found in **Appendix B**.

6.6 RELEASE OF THE DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

The Notice of Availability of the DEIS and public hearings was published in the Federal Register on November 4, 2011. The public was notified of the release of the DEIS and the public hearings through local newspaper announcements, postal notices, and the project website. In addition, copies of the DEIS were available at the following locations:

- ❖ CDOT Headquarters, 4201 East Arkansas Ave., Denver
 - ❖ CDOT Region 2, 905 Erie Ave., Pueblo
 - ❖ FHWA – Colorado Division, 12300 West Dakota Ave. #180, Lakewood
 - ❖ PACOG / Pueblo City Planning Dept, 211 East D Street, Pueblo
 - ❖ Pueblo County Clerk, 215 10th St., Pueblo
 - ❖ Pueblo City Hall, 200 South Main St., Pueblo
- ❖ Libraries:
 - Colorado State University Pueblo
 - Pueblo Community College Library
 - Pueblo Library – Barkman Branch
 - Pueblo Library – Lamb Branch
 - Pueblo Library – Pueblo West Branch
 - Pueblo Library – Rawlings Branch
 - Pueblo Library at the Y
 - ❖ Bessemer Historical Society, Steelworks Museum, and CF&I, 225 Canal St., Pueblo
 - ❖ Mineral Palace Towers, 1414 North Santa Fe Ave., Pueblo

In addition, the DEIS was distributed to 7 federal agencies, 7 state agencies, 16 local agencies, 7 elected officials, 5 consulting parties, 8 interested parties, 4 PLT members, and 14 TLT members for review and comment.

6.6.1 Public Hearing

A public hearing was held on December 8, 2011 to present the findings of the DEIS to the community and to receive feedback on the proposed alternatives. The agency and public comments received, including written comments and the court reporter transcripts of oral comments received at the informational meeting and the public hearing, are included in **Appendix G**. During the public hearing, attendees were also able to speak to members of the project team who were in attendance regarding any specific issues of concern; for example, project timing, the Uniform Relocation Act, or right-of-way impacts.

6.6.2 Comments Received

By the final day of the 45-day comment period (December 18, 2011), FHWA and CDOT had received 64 comments. These comments were received at the public hearing, mailed directly to CDOT, or submitted via the project website. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, City of Pueblo Historic Preservation Commission, Colorado Parks and Wildlife, St. Charles Mesa Water District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and U.S. Department of the Interior also submitted comments to the lead agencies. Two petitions were also submitted: 49 individuals signed the Eiler Heights petition, and 252 individuals signed the St. Mary petition. Each of these petitions expressed concerns about impacts to properties surrounding Mesa Avenue.

The comments received were mixed in support and criticism of the details of the DEIS and identification of the Preferred Alternative. More than half of the comments remarked on the specific elements of the DEIS analysis and the impacts in the corridor. Fourteen of the comments were specifically related to ROW and relocation of properties.

Copies of all of the comments, along with responses to the comments, are included in Appendix G.

6.7 COMMENTS AND COORDINATION SUMMARY

This chapter summarizes the public involvement process used throughout the life of the New Pueblo Freeway project. The methods of engagement were specifically tailored to the needs of the project as well as the citizens. The various techniques used to involve stakeholders in the decision process resulted in a project that is designed to address the safety and local and regional mobility issues of I-25 while supporting the community's values and vision for the City of Pueblo.

The next step in the process is to distribute the FEIS and hold an additional public hearing, along with a 30-day comment period for review of the FEIS. Comments made at this time will be addressed in the subsequent Record of Decision, to be issued by FHWA and CDOT, which will document the decisions made for the New Pueblo Freeway. The FEIS availability and comment process will be similar to that for the DEIS.